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WEEKEND, MARCH 4-6, 2016

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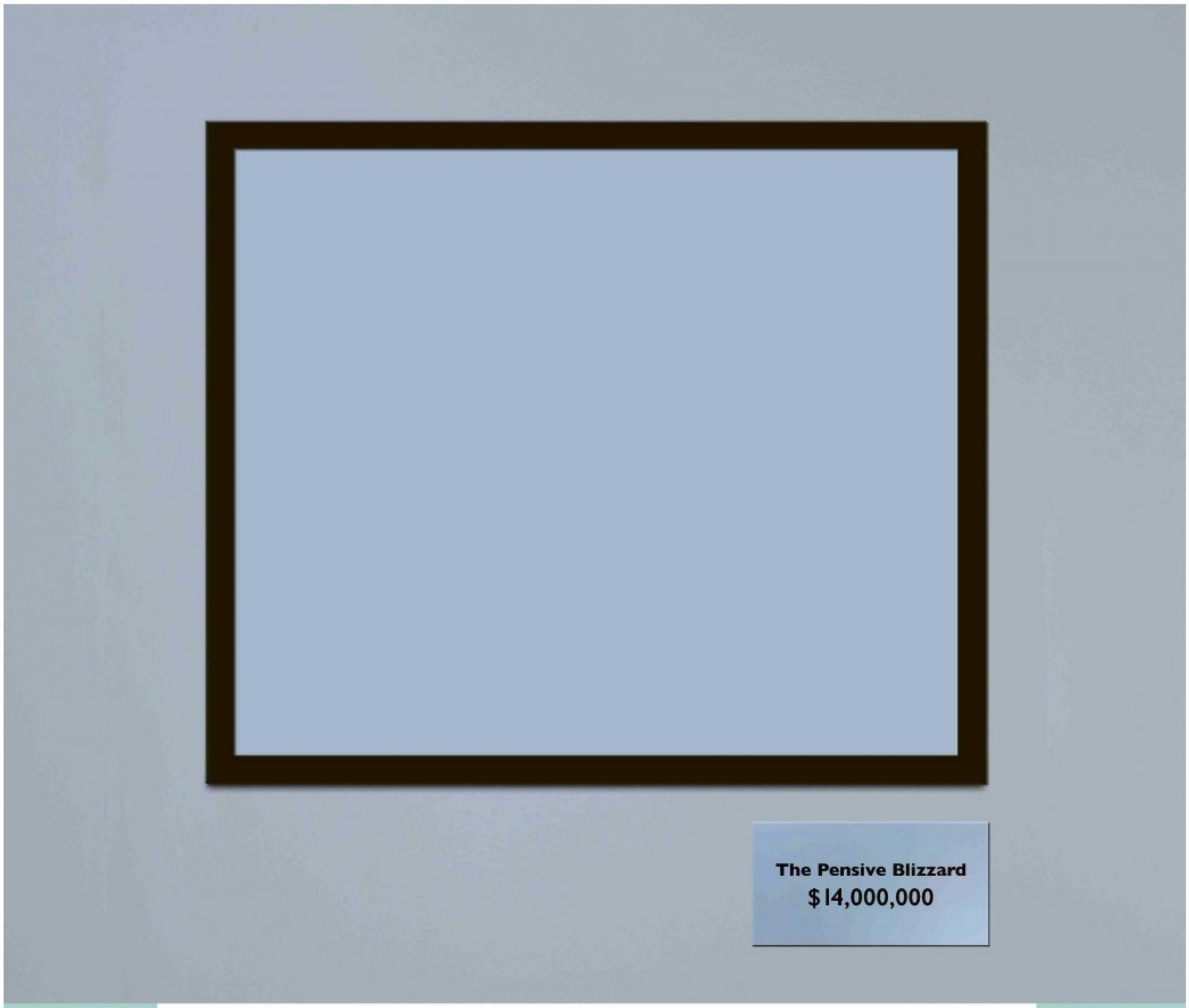

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Toronto metro

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metroVIEWS

182

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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

European Union considering 'large-scale' migrant deportation scheme. **World**

The dark side of viral videos

WILDLIFE

That friendly raccoon could actually have a fatal disease

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Cute clips of Toronto raccoons behaving oddly are bringing new meaning to the term "viral video."

From raccoons riding the TTC to those lining up at TIFF, there's been a bevy of online videos starring local trash pandas. The latest, posted to Torontoist on Thursday, shows a woman walking along Beverley Street with a raccoon in tow.

While their antics seem click-worthy, many of the raccoons in the videos appear to be really sick, said Toronto Wildlife Centre director Nathalie Karvonen.

"That's not a normal raccoon," she said after watching the most recent clip. "It looks like it has a raging case of distemper."

This is the worst year for raccoon distemper — a virus that affects the central nervous system, causing animals to appear lethargic or unafraid of people — in more than 20 years, Karvonen said, noting the wildlife centre is receiving upwards of 30 calls a day about raccoons acting strangely.

There's no answer to what caused the spike, but everyone can do their part to stop the spread. So, the next time you see a raccoon interacting with people, instead of filming it with your phone, Karvonen said you should call the wildlife centre or Toronto Animal Services instead.

Distemper, which is almost always fatal, doesn't pose a threat to humans but can be spread to dogs and other domestic animals.

"These animals shouldn't be left outside," Karvonen said.

This has been one of the worst years ever for raccoon distemper in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

WILD BEHAVIOUR IN THE CITY RECENT CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FOUR-LEGGED KIND

A video of a raccoon on board a TTC subway car on Feb. 2 garnered thousands of views on YouTube. (The Canadian Press)

A crafty raccoon snuck into the R.H. King Academy in Scarborough on Feb. 24 much to the delight of students. Videos of the masked invader were circulating on Snapchat and Twitter. (Torstar News Service file)

Back in December, a raccoon was caught on camera stealing a snack from a local doughnut shop. (YouTube screenshot)

On Feb. 4, a video of a raccoon apparently mourning a friend who was hit by a vehicle was covered by media around the world. (YouTube screenshot)

Birds in boathouse ruffle some feathers

POLICE

Three-year project aims to evict pesky barn swallows

Toronto police are bringing reinforcements in an ongoing battle to rid their boathouse of winged invaders they say pose a threat to officers' — and possibly the public's — safety.

For years, the force's marine unit has struggled to deal with an infestation of barn swallows, which nest in the boathouse and leave it covered in droppings.

The birds are a protected species and cannot be disturbed during nesting season. Moving their nests requires permission from the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

In a letter to city officials last year, the Toronto Police Services Board called for prompt action on what it called an issue with "potential impacts on operational resources and public safety, as well as on the health and safety of members of the Marine Unit."

Marine police search for solutions. DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The infestation "necessitates costly cleaning operations and utilizes the resources of the unit unnecessarily," the letter said.

"It can also have an adverse effect on public safety as it can at times impede emergency response due to the need to remove bird feces from boats and equipment."

A new three-year project set to begin this month aims to find the birds a new home and discourage them from returning to their current nesting grounds, a spokeswoman for the city said.

Officers will have to deal with their unwelcome guests at least another season, however: the first year of the project consists mainly of consulting with experts and surveying the barn swallow population, Natasha Hinds Fitzimmins said in an email.

Next year, an alternate nesting site will be set up within a kilometre of the boathouse, as laid out in the ministry's requirements, she said. Existing nests will also be removed and additional measures taken to deter the birds from returning.

The last year will be spent surveying the birds to see how they respond to the change.

In the meantime, she said, "the best course of action to reduce the chance of bird infestation has been and continues to be to keep the doors closed, especially during periods of bird migration."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

HOMELESSNESS

'Quaint space' on Airbnb gives pause

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

Airbnb had some pretty cheap options this week for people seeking out a place to stay in Toronto: Only about $25 a night for a street corner of their very own.

"Quaint space on best street," read one posting accompanied by a photo of a homeless person's bedding at Queen and Victoria streets.

"Spacious home with ceilings" read another, showing a homeless person's sleeping spot under the Gardiner Expressway.

The photos weren't staged, but the spots weren't really on offer. It was a guerilla-marketing stunt/fundraiser organized pro bono by public relations firm Edelman on behalf of Engage and Change.

And it worked.

Airbnb pulled the ads after about 24 hours with a kind explanation that they violated terms of service. But the photos have since taken on a second life on social media, driving donations to Engage and Change.

"In order to get people to think about homelessness, we need to be really, truly disruptive because people tend to get numb and forget about it," said Jody Steinhauer, the nonprofit's founder.

This camp at Queen and Victoria streets was among the spaces used in Engage and Change's campaign on Airbnb. COURTESY EVAN DAVIS

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Time to celebrate, not trash talk T.O.

BIRTHDAY

Local booster group to host festivities as city turns 182

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Toronto's 182nd birthday is coming up, and for one local booster it's another reminder to stop complaining about the city and start celebrating it.

Micayla Doria is the founder of Celebrate Toronto, which hosts an annual birthday bash for the city and runs pop-up art and photography exhibitions throughout the year.

"There's nothing I don't like about the city. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing," Doria said.

Now in its third year, Celebrate Toronto will be taking over the Steam Whistle brewery Saturday to raise a glass to the city and shine a light on those working to make it an even better place to live.

Ironically, Doria says she got the idea for an event "that celebrates the city for itself" after spending two years abroad.

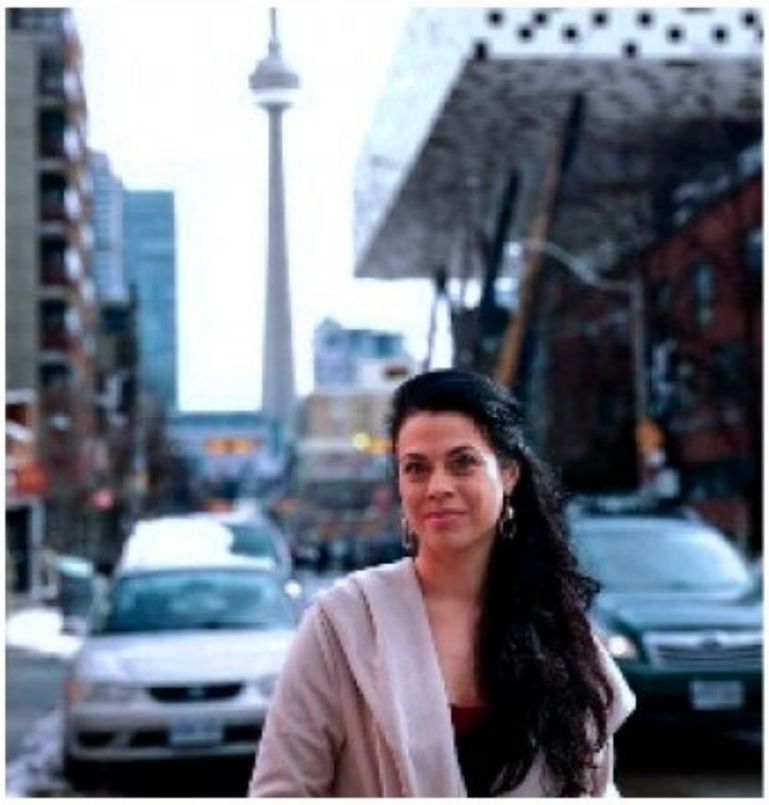
"I went all over the world: Africa, Malaysia, Thailand, Australia, South America, western Canada," she said. "But when I came home I was like 'everything is here.'"

Whether it's sampling the diverse cuisine on offer or strolling through High Park when the cherry blossoms are out, Doria loves Toronto and she can't understand why so many — including those who live here — like to trash talk the city.

"It's like people can go their whole day without realizing how great things are here," she said. "Sure, you can complain that the TTC broke down again, but we should be fortunate that we have the transit system that we do. There are places in the world that don't even have roads right now."

It's not that Doria thinks Toronto doesn't have problems, it's that she has faith in the city — and the people who live here — to solve them.

"Just because the city isn't perfect now doesn't mean it won't be in the future," she said.



Micayla Doria has travelled the world, but found that no other place compares to the city of Toronto. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

TORONTO STEREOTYPES

We asked people across the country to tell us what they think of Toronto. There was plenty of praise, but a lot of criticism as well. So we asked Celebrate Toronto founder Micayla Doria to respond to some of the most common complaints.

People in Toronto are cold and unwelcoming
"I don't find that at all," Doria said. "You are who you hang out with, so to each their own, I guess."

Torontonians are snobs about other cities
"Not at all," Doria replied. "That would make us hypocrites. We have people from all over the world living here. How can we look down our noses at others when everyone here is from somewhere else?"

Toronto thinks it's the centre of the universe
"I'm one of those people," Doria joked. "I don't want to sound pretentious, but I think we're a great international hub."

Real estate in Toronto is overpriced
"I have to agree with that one," Doria said.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Hobbyist has city in stitches

If you're looking for some Toronto-centric art to hang on your wall, Ben Brommell has you all stitched up.

The 24-year-old filmmaker has created a cross-stitch of The Six, complete with iconic buildings like Honest Ed's and the CN Tower.

It's an impressive piece, given Brommell just started cross-stitching a few months ago.

"I just can't stop picking up hobbies," he said. "I used to have this hour-long streetcar ride to work, so rather than just sit there and watch the scenery go by, I thought I would do something productive."

Brommell started his cross-stitch masterpiece by drawing the pattern in Photoshop, with one pixel equalling one stitch. About two months and precisely 7,271 stitches later, he was done.

He posted his creation on Reddit, and says the reaction has been "surprisingly" positive — so much so that he's decided to sell the pattern on Etsy.

"It's handmade and, once you're finished, you have something that you created yourself," he said.

LUKE SIMCOE/METRO

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What else?

Inspirational women

Heritage Toronto and Women in Toronto Politics will mark International Women's Day on Tuesday by launching a month-long celebration of eight women who have challenged inequality and discrimination in the city. Through a series of exhibits and panel discussions, the campaign — dubbed Toronto The Just — aims to draw inspiration from these outstanding figures.

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

1 Doris Anderson (1921-2007)

Doris Anderson
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A journalist and gender equality pioneer, she wrote critical editorials about abortion, divorce and child welfare as editor of Chatelaine. She was chair of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Jean Lumb
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

2 Jean Lumb (1919-2002)

She opened a grocery store in Toronto at age 16 and went on to found the Kwong Chow restaurant in Chinatown. A social justice advocate, she started and chaired the Save Chinatown campaign to protect Chinese businesses on Dundas Street when they faced a demolition threat.

3 Lilian McGregor (1924-2012)

Lilian McGregor
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A Toronto nurse who worked to sustain Aboriginal culture and tradition in the city. She was the first Elder-In-Residence at UofT's First Nations House and was the first Aboriginal woman to receive an honorary law doctorate from the university.

4 Fran Odette (1962-)

Fran Odette
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A social worker, author and educator fighting for the rights of women with disabilities. Currently serving as president of Nellie's Women's Shelter, she's also been on the education committee of the Rainbow Health Network.

5 Mary Ann Shadd Cary (1823-1893)

Mary Ann Shadd Cary
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada's first black newspaper publisher, she was an anti-slavery activist and often spoke about abolition, integration and welfare of black communities in Canada and the U.S. She was also the first black woman to earn a law degree from Howard University.

6 Ursula Franklin (1921-)

Ursula Franklin
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A physicist and philosopher whose family survived the Holocaust. She moved to Toronto in 1948 and was the first woman to lead the mining and metallurgy department at the University of Toronto's engineering faculty. Her research led to the end of atmospheric weapons testing.

7 Jane Jacobs (1916-2006)

Jane Jacobs
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

An urbanist, author and activist who challenged prevailing urban planning methods and influenced generations of planners and city-dwellers. She was influential in the revitalization of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood, and opposed the Spadina Expressway expansion into downtown.

8 Ladies Garment Workers Union (1931)

More than 500 women of Local 72 famously walked off the job in protest of unfair labour conditions. They unsuccessfully demanded a 15 per cent wage increase and shorter work weeks among other concerns.

+ EXHIBITIONS

Toronto The Just exhibit will be at St. Lawrence Hall (March 8-12), Etobicoke Civic Centre (March 14-18), Scarborough Museum (March 19-26) and York University (March 28-April 3). More information at heritagetoronto.org

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Our $28B used economy

STUDY

But Toronto lags behind in second-hand item sharing

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

Sales associates Jennifer Rossetti and Colt Molson sort through vintage accessories at consignment boutique Fashionably Yours on Queen West. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

Leaving a doll on the curb with a "free" sign attached, buying used tuxedo pants and loaning a novel to a friend. They're all small transactions that add up to a surprisingly huge chunk of Canada's economy.

The so-called "second-hand economy" was worth $28 billion in Canada last year, according to a study funded by online marketplace Kijiji. Toronto, however, — despite a plethora of buy-and-sell Facebook groups and vintage shops on practically every block of some neighbourhoods — is, in many ways, left out of the mix.

On average, Canadians get, give, sell, trade or loan 77 items on the second-hand market every year, according to the Kijiji study. But the average Torontonian only acquires or disposes of 69.4 items a year. The study found, overall, that the second-hand market was less sizable in big cities than in smaller towns and rural communities.

There's no hard data on exactly why, but Lindsay Tedds, an economics professor at the University of Victoria who helped crunch information obtained through the study, said it might be because most people acquire used goods from close family networks, which can be stronger in rural areas. One of the most interesting takeaways was the sheer number of people who are taking part in the second-hand economy.

"Eighty-five per cent of Canadians do, and that's more than participate in the labour force," Tedds said. The high enthusiasm for used things doesn't surprise Catherine Knoll, a co-founder of the Toronto Vintage Clothing Show, which is running Saturday and Sunday at Exhibition Place.

She estimates that she and her husband disposed of more than 1,000 used things in the course of their home renovations alone, donating them to charity or selling them for nominal amounts on Kijiji. That's on top of a buying penchant for vintage clothes and home furnishings. The top reasons people gave Kijiji for acquiring used things included price, a chance to be environmentally conscious and an opportunity for "treasure hunting." They're all things Knoll understands.

"Items were meant to be handed down," she said. "Things lasted through time and people enjoy that quality. And it's having something unique. Instead of having fashion at the mall, you're having something nobody else has."

IN NUMBERS

In 2015: The average number of second-hand goods acquired per person

- **Canada:** 77 total (17 purchased, 9.4 received as a donation, 2.7 swapped for, 5.2 borrowed or rented)
- **Toronto:** 69.4 total (12.8 purchased, 7.6 received as a donation, 2.7 swapped for, 4.2 borrowed or rented) SOURCE: KIJIJI SECOND-HAND ECONOMY STUDY

IN BRIEF

Photographer charged after alleged sex assault

Police in Toronto say a man is charged after a photographer allegedly sexually assaulted a model during a photo shoot.

Investigators say the 18-year-old woman went to the man's downtown Toronto home on the afternoon of Feb. 20 to pose for photographs.

It's alleged that when the woman began posing, the man sexually assaulted her.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Camp offer made to Syrian refugee girls

The Glen Bernard Camp is offering a special summer experience for 24 Syrian refugee girls ages 11 to 13.

The three-week annual excursion in Algonquin Park offers kids an opportunity to experience canoeing, sailing, high ropes climbing, arts and swimming. It costs $1,050 to participate but the Syrian girls will attend for free. "They'll be our guests," said owner Jocelyn Palm.

GILBERT NGABO/METRO

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Carbon pricing accord

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ministers in agreement, with regional adaptations

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canada's premiers have agreed that carbon pricing will be part of any national plan to address climate change.

He said they will study pricing options that would be adapted to the specific circumstances of each province and territory.

The working group is one of four announced by Trudeau in Vancouver on Thursday after a day-long climate-change meeting with first ministers.

Trudeau said they are to meet again in the fall when the working groups are to report back.

"The commitment we made today, with the Vancouver Declaration, shows all first ministers in this country united on carbon pricing mechanisms," he said.

"The fact that we have consensus on the need to include carbon pricing in our approach to addressing climate change right across the country is a great thing indeed."

He added he's happy there's a plan to move forward while respecting regional differences.

"The working group that we have put together will dig into the mechanisms that will be most effective and most appropriate for each jurisdiction, recognizing that there are areas that face greater challenges."

The federal government has been quietly insisting for weeks that a national carbon price, as promised in the Liberal election platform, will be imposed from above if provinces are unable to agree. The day started with several premiers pushing back against that federal resolve.

Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil suggested there was "more than one way to deal with the carbon issue."

He said Atlantic Canada's heavy spending on hydro-electric transmission has effectively already built in a carbon price with electricity rates that are the highest in Canada.

Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski said he and his fellow territorial premiers are against imposing additional costs on consumers of fossil fuels in the North.

Brad Wall of Saskatchewan came to Vancouver warning against a carbon tax in a fragile Canadian economy, but cleared the air Wednesday by saying his province would participate "constructively" in any working groups. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau leads Canada's premiers to a news conference during the First Ministers Meeting in Vancouver on Thursday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

MANITOBA

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger, who faces re-election this spring, said there's a common understanding among premiers that action on climate change can and should take many paths. "The do-nothing option is not there," he said.

BORDER

Police project delayed

A Canada-U.S. initiative to create new, cross-border law-enforcement teams has been "postponed" due to unresolved concerns about how to treat police officers accused of breaking the law.

The so-called next-generation border project has been put off as discussions continue with U.S. officials — almost four years after pilot projects were supposed to begin, said Staff Sgt. Julie Gagnon, a force spokeswoman.

The initiative — part of the 2011 Canada-U.S. perimeter security pact — would see the two countries build on joint border-policing efforts by creating integrated teams in areas such as intelligence and criminal investigations.

Two pilot projects were supposed to get underway by summer 2012.

But in 2013, it emerged that the effort was being held up by the difficult question of which country's legal system would apply if a police officer were accused of breaking the law.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MADAGASCAR

Veterinarian learning to protect lemurs

Meg Crane
For Metro

A Malagasy veterinarian has arrived in Canada to get firsthand surgery training in hopes of sparing Madagascar's native wildlife, such as lemurs, from being decimated by strays.

Hoping to learn the skills to spay and neuter wildlife in Winnipeg, Rajaonarivelo left Madagascar for the first time on Feb. 26.

Jonas Watson, of Tuxedo Animal Hospital, says veterinary schools in Madagascar offer no practical training. Watson is one of the vets behind Mad Dog Initiative, an organization that goes to Madagascar to trap, spay or neuter and release stray cats and dogs.

"We get some local people with veterinary experience to help us," said Watson. That's where the team met Rajaonarivelo — she was brought on with no practical surgical training to help.

"She is a quick learner and she retains everything you tell her," Watson said.

In Winnipeg, Rajaonarivelo is working with about a dozen different vets, including those at the Assiniboine Park Zoo's clinic.

"It's pretty different from what I know in my country because there are just lots of machines (here)," Rajaonarivelo said. "When we do the surgery in Madagascar ... we don't have the (same equipment)."

Although the mechanics are different, she said she's learning skills that she'll be able to use in her practice when she returns.

Next summer, Rajaonarivelo will be leading Mad Dog's spay and neuter project in Madagascar.

"We do this project to protect our wildlife," said Rajaonarivelo. "It's very important for us to protect them."

The non-profit also paid for her to come to Winnipeg, so financial donations are being accepted to offset those costs, Watson said.

"I went there thinking we were going to help dogs and help protect wildlife," said Watson. But the most rewarding part has been helping the people there, he added, such as Rajaonarivelo, by giving them opportunities.

Tsiky Rajaonarivelo with Birchwood resident cat, Harvey.
MEG CANE/FOR METRO

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Your skin will have the winter blues even after the snow is long gone. While skin may produce more oils in the spring, it's important to remember to keep it conditioned and smooth by reaching for products that will cleanse thoroughly and seep in quickly, to quench that thirst without weighing your skin down.

try **Simple® Micellar Wipes, L'Oréal Paris® Age Perfect Hydra-Nutrition Golden Balm Night, St. Ives® Pear Nectar & Soy Lotion**

TIP
Help lock in moisture by exfoliating before applying lotion

mane attraction

This season, embracing your hair's natural texture is all the rage, but that's no reason to let dryness and frizz take root. Everything from indoor heating to wool hats can wreck your hair during the winter, so get a head start on recovering your strands with a shampoo that strengthens and rejuvenates hair.

try **Garnier Whole Blends™ Honey Treasures Shampoo, OGX® Strength + Body Bamboo Fiber-Full Shampoo**

TIP
Use the low-heat option on your hair dryer to help prevent damage

fresh start

You've spent all winter hiding under layers of clothes, but with the right tools, it's easy to embrace the beautiful weather and look your best. Look for hard-working products that'll make hair removal a cinch from now 'til the end of summer. Treat your teeth by switching to a deep-cleaning and whitening toothpaste that will help remove surface stains.

try **Philips Satinelle Prestige Epilator, Crest® ProHealth™ [HD] Toothpaste System**

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

EUROPEAN UNION

Mass deportation of migrants considered

Turkey is under growing pressure to consider a major escalation in migrant deportations from Greece, a top European Union official said Thursday, amid preparations for a highly anticipated summit of EU and Turkish leaders next week.

European Council President Donald Tusk ended a six-nation tour of migration crisis countries in Turkey, where 850,000 migrants and refugees left last year for Greek islands.

"We agree that the refugee flows still remain far too high," Tusk said after meeting Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu.

"To many in Europe, the most promising method seems to be a fast and large-scale mechanism to ship back irregular migrants arriving in Greece. It would effectively break the business model of the smugglers."

Tusk was careful to single out illegal economic migrants for possible deportation, not asylum-seekers. And he wasn't clear who would actually carry out the expulsions: Greece itself, EU border agency Frontex or even other organizations like NATO.

32,000

Greek officials said that nearly 32,000 migrants were stranded in the country following a decision by Austria and four ex-Yugolsav countries to drastically reduce the flow of refugees.

"We consider the (Macedonian) border to be closed ... Letting 80 through a day is not significant," Migration Minister Ioannis Mouzals said.

He said the army had built 10,000 additional places at temporary shelters since the border closures, with work underway on a further 15,000.

But a top UN official on migration warned that number of people stranded in Greece could quickly double.

Peter Sutherland said the "inevitable consequence" of closed borders throughout the Balkans "is that Greece increasingly becomes a camp for refugees and migrants."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Migrants line up outside the hospitality centre of the Greek Island of Samos. LEFTERIS PITARAKIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

American finds possible Flight MH370 debris
An American adventurer named Blaine Gibson said that he discovered part of an aircraft on a sandbar off the coast of Mozambique. The debris could be from the Malaysia Airlines flight that disappeared two years ago with 239 people aboard.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cholera kills dozens every month in Haiti
Cholera, which arrived in Haiti in October 2010, has sickened more than 770,000 people and killed more than 9,200. So far this year, it has sickened more than 6,000 and is killing an average of 37 people a month.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kalamazoo shooter to be examined before trial
A man charged in the Jan. 20 fatal shooting of six people in Michigan will undergo a mental competency exam to determine if he can participate in his defence. Prosecutor Jeff Getting said the review of 45-year-old Jason Dalton's mental health could delay the criminal case by at least two months.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mitt Romney, top left, gives a speech on the state of the Republican party in Salt Lake City, Utah, Thursday. **Romney spoke about Donald Trump, right, calling him a fraud** and arguing against his nomination, a sentiment with which Sen. John McCain, bottom right, agreed. GETTY IMAGES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trump blasted by McCain, Romney

POLITICS

Ex-presidential nominees urge GOP to shun frontrunner

The Republican's most recent presidential nominees, Mitt Romney and John McCain, lambasted current front-runner Donald Trump on Thursday, calling him unfit for office and a danger for the nation, in an extraordinary show of intra-party chaos.

"His is not the temperament of a stable, thoughtful leader," Romney declared.

He called Trump "a phoney" who is "playing the American public for suckers," a man whose "imagination must not be married to real power."

Hours later, Trump lashed back, calling Romney "a choke artist" who lost to Barack Obama four years ago only because he was such a poor candidate.

The vicious feud marked a near-unprecedented scenario pitting the Republican Party's most prominent leaders, past and present, against each other as Democrats begin to unite around Hillary Clinton. Underlying the clash is a bleak reality for panicking Republican officials. Beyond harsh words, there is little they see to stop Trump's march toward the presidential nomination.

Party leaders are poring over complicated delegate math, outlining hazy scenarios for a contested national convention and even flirting with the idea of a third-party effort.

Romney confidant Ron Kaufman, a senior member of the Republican National Committee, openly embraced the possibility of a contested convention: "If that's the only way to stop Trump, it makes sense," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TALKING BACK

Kelly prepares for debate
All eyes are on Megyn Kelly and Donald Trump during Fox News Channel's Megyn Kelly in Thursday's Republican presidential debate. She said she prepared the same "tough but fair" questions for him as she does for other candidates.

Kelly and Trump clashed during the first GOP debate last summer. Trump then boycotted a debate that Fox telecast. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MISSILE LAUNCH

North Korea readies nuclear weapons

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has ordered his country's nuclear weapons made ready for use at a moment's notice, the official state news agency reported Friday.

Kim also said his country will ready its military so it is prepared to carry out pre-emptive attacks, calling the current situation very precarious, according to KCNA.

On Thursday, North Korea fired six short-range projectiles into the sea off its east coast, South Korean officials said, just hours after the UN Security Council approved the toughest sanctions on the North in two decades for its recent nuclear test and long-range rocket launch.

The firings also came shortly after South Korea's National Assembly passed its first legislation on human rights in North Korea.

It wasn't immediately known exactly what North Korea fired, and the projectiles could be missiles, artillery or rockets, South Korea's Defence Ministry said.

North Korea routinely test-fires missiles and rockets, but often conducts weapons launches when angered at international condemnation.

Thursday's firings were seen as a "low-level" response to the UN sanctions, with North Korea unlikely to launch any major provocation until its landmark ruling Workers' Party convention in May, according to Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul.

North Korea has not issued an official reaction to the new UN sanctions.

"No kind of sanctions will ever work on us, because we've lived under U.S. sanctions for more than half a century," said Pyongyang resident Song Hyo Il.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

150 km

The projectiles, fired from the eastern coastal town of Wonsan, **flew about 100 to 150 kilometres before landing in the sea,** South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

Festivals feel loonie's pinch

ECONOMY

Music and arts events booking more Canadian performers

The Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival has recruited some notable American names in the past, including Saturday Night Live star Kate McKinnon and writer-actor Michael Ian Black.

But this year it will be an exclusively Canadian event for a reason that's no laughing matter: The low loonie means the fest can't afford to book international talent.

This year's lineup is all homegrown and a bit more eclectic than usual, with names including Rush guitarist Alex Lifeson and Dave Bidini of the Rheostatics, along with comedians Gavin Crawford, Jessica Holmes and Sean Cullen.

They may be household names on this side of the border, but the festival isn't expecting to sell as many tickets as in previous years.

"I think we probably will not," says Paul Snepsts, executive director of the event, which kicked off Thursday.

"That's not because of a lack of talent in this country. It just seems, and I think this is true in music as well as comedy, that we have a tendency to be prone to buying into something once it has achieved success elsewhere."

Some other arts festivals are also grappling with the weak dollar.

"We're feeling it somewhat," says Josh Grossman, artistic director of the TD Toronto Jazz Festival, which showcases talent from around the world.

Grossman says he's heard organizers of other festivals say the loonie is also affecting their approach to programming.

He expects his festival may have to raise some ticket prices "a little bit."

"It's hard to say exactly, but a show that we might have been able to sell for $25 last year is maybe going to be $30 this year, that sort of thing," he says.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

FIRST VICTIM

Squamish Valley Music Festival cancelled

B.C.'s Squamish Valley Music Festival, which takes place in August, has officially been cancelled for 2016. Squamish Mayor Patricia Heintzman said organizers told her it was a "business decision," which she suspects was likely influenced by the low Canadian dollar.

METRO

Janneke Coenen dances at the Squamish Valley Music Festival in August last year. The festival has been cancelled for 2016, and Squamish Mayor Patricia Heintzman suspects the dollar influenced that decision. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

IN BRIEF

Warmer ocean points to boom in lobster catch

Scientists with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute predict this year's lobster season will get rolling two or three weeks early as warming ocean temperatures prompt lobsters to move inshore.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google joins the Zika fight

Google is donating $1 million US to fight the spread of the Zika virus and is building a platform to process weather and travel data to predict where it will hit next.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

market minute

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TSX 13,123.65 (+105.72)

OIL $34.57 US (–9¢)

GOLD $1,258.20 US (+$16.40)

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DOW JONES: 16,943.90 (+44.58)

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
SCIENCE FRIDAYS

Stress and grief can trigger heart trouble. A new study shows joyous events like becoming a grandparent can break your heart too.

DECODED

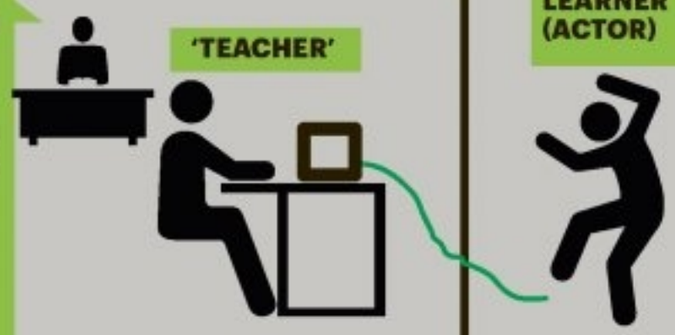
'Just following orders'

That was the catchphrase of the **Milgram experiments**, some of the most infamous studies in the history of science. In the 1960s, psychologist Stanley Milgram believed he'd proven regular people could be easily convinced to inflict what they thought was a painful, or even deadly, electric shock on somebody if they were ordered to by an authority figure. He said it was a profound insight into the minds of perpetrators of atrocities like the Holocaust. But reputable science must be replicable. And the Milgram experiments, which required that researchers tell people to harm others, were so ethically problematic that there was no way to repeat them in a modern lab. But now, someone has tried.

The original Milgram experiments

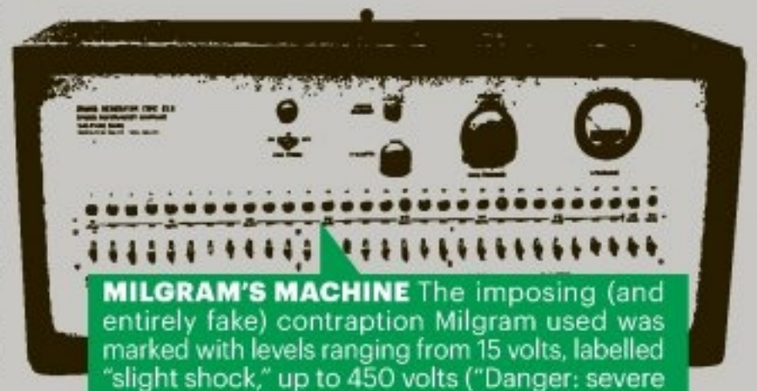
Stanley Milgram, 1963

EXPERIMENTER
As the "shocks" and screams got more intense, the lab assistant delivered lines from a script if participants started to express doubts. First "Please continue," then "The experiment requires that you continue," then "It is absolutely essential that you continue" and finally "You have no other choice, you must go on."



STUDY TITLE: BEHAVIOURAL STUDY OF OBEDIENCE

Method: The volunteer research subject, called "the teacher," read a list of words for "the learner," an actor who was hooked up to a (fake) shock machine in another room, out of sight. If the learner made a mistake repeating the words, the teacher was instructed to deliver ever-stronger electric shocks. Prerecorded screams were played, and just before the highest shock was to be given, the learner fell silent. **Result:** In one experiment, 65 per cent of "teachers" obeyed all orders, right up to the end.



MILGRAM'S MACHINE The imposing (and entirely fake) contraption Milgram used was marked with levels ranging from 15 volts, labelled "slight shock," up to 450 volts ("Danger: severe shock"). Among his hundreds of human guinea pigs, many later reported either discomfort or confusion, but a few suffered more serious effects — even a heart attack and seizures. Some experts have even argued what Milgram did meets the definition of torture under international law.

A modern Milgram

Patrick Haggard and colleagues, 2016

EXPERIMENTER
In one study, an experimenter stood over the subject and told her which key to press — a little nudge that proved to have a clear impact on subject's actions. In another, the experimenter looked away and let the subjects decide for themselves.

STUDY TITLE: COERCION CHANGES THE SENSE OF AGENCY IN THE HUMAN BRAIN

Method: This experiment had no element of secrecy. The research subjects sat across from each other with a keyboard between them with two keys: One delivered a painful (but not dangerous) electric shock, while the other did nothing. Some subjects were told to deliver shocks (which earned them a small financial reward), and others were given free choice as to whether to deliver them or not. **Result:** The research subjects who were ordered by the lab assistant to deliver shocks were significantly more likely to do so.

The late Staney Milgram is an authority, albeit an extremely controversial one, in the world of psychology.

The average social psychology textbook devotes eight pages to his work, and interest in it is growing exponentially.

The question of why good, or at least normal, people sometimes do others harm has eternal appeal. It's easy to see why: If we understand that, couldn't we understand, for example, why some children are bullies, or why some people become terrorists?

Investigating that question is more complicated than it seems, says St. Thomas University psychology professor Ian Nicholson, a critic of Milgram-style experiments old and new.

"Milgram came out of an era — which hasn't completely ended — where there was a dream of being able to develop a level of exactitude toward human nature akin to the certainty we have in the natural sciences," Nicholson says. "We'd know definitively why people become bad."

Drawing conclusions about the Holocaust from people's behaviour in a lab is a logical leap too far, he argues.

Unlike research subjects, perpetrators of atrocities knew exactly what they were doing, and believed it was right. And that's the key distinction, Nicholson says.

He likens Milgram's lab to an "unusual space" like a magician's stage. You might be asked to volunteer to take a saw to someone, and it might be socially acceptable to do it. But that wouldn't make you an axe murderer. Everyone knows "Kooky, goofy, weird stuff goes on" in psych labs, he says, and people "roll with it."

In the Milgram 2.0 experiments, there was no deception. Participants knew they were dishing out real pain, and they continued. Author Patrick Haggard told Nature, "Your sense of responsibility is reduced whenever someone orders you to do something."

Still, this took place in a lab. It's hard to make a case, Nicholson says, that the results are "generalizable." What he suggests instead is less electrifying: Consult historical records, and if you want to understand people who've done horrible things, talk to them.

FASCINATING FINDS OF THE WEEK

ATTRACTIVE IDEA
For years, techies have dreamt of Magnetic Random Access Memory, a data-storage method so sturdy that in-progress essays would survive power outages; so efficient, phones would last days. Until now the method (which involves reversing the spin of electrons) required a huge blast of electricity. But Dutch researchers have found a workaround: bending the electric current with a sort of anti-magnet.

FOR THE GATOR GOOD
Nesting birds in the Everglades tend to live near alligators' lairs. The reptiles are handy bodyguards against racoons and other predators who like to snatch eggs and chicks. Now there's new evidence, published in the journal PLOS One, of why alligators dig this arrangement. Wading birds lay more eggs than they can raise, and they get rid of extra chicks by pushing them out of the nest. Alligators snack on the surplus.

SOUND SMART

A hypothesis, now confirmed, for why island coasts are more biodiverse than open oceans: Currents around islands dredge up nutrient-rich water that nourishes phytoplankton, which provide food for invertebrates and fish, which attract sea birds — and presto! Coral reef.

Citizen Scientist

Should I try cutting wheat, dairy or eggs out of my child's diet?

QUESTION
My four-year-old gets frequent tummy aches. Other parents swear by eliminating irritating foods — wheat, dairy, eggs, etc. Does that actually work? Andrea in Halifax

Dear Andrea,

I can't address your child's issues from here in Toronto, and also I'm not a health professional. Get thee to your family doctor! Not Dr. Google. The dietary-advice industry is a duck pond: It's full of quacks.

To your question: Yes, elimination diets (i.e. dairy-free) have their place for children with an allergy (diagnosed by a doctor, usually with a skin test), or an intolerance (such as lactose intolerance and others).

A study out of Umeå University in Sweden this week looked at food allergies and parent-identified hypersensitivities in 2,585 seven- and eight-year-olds. Just 0.6 per cent showed evidence of reactions to at least one basic food (milk, eggs, fish or wheat). But eight times as many had parents who *said* they were allergic to one of those things. Years later, many of the kids were still on restricted diets, though the majority had either outgrown their allergy or intolerance (many do), or never had it in the first place.

Dieticians will tell you growing kids should enjoy a variety of foods. Without a good medical reason, they'd rarely advise cutting a whole category like dairy, which for all its faults is rich in calcium and protein.

Science question? Email scene@metronews.ca

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MOVIES MUSIC TELEVISION GOSSIP

Gerard Butler: The actor we love to hate

Gerard Butler is looking to redeem his bad movie rap with London Has Fallen, which opens this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

ANALYSIS

Good looks, acting chops and bad movie role choices

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Last week as I fought traffic en route to a London Has Fallen screening, I tweeted from the back of a cab, "Out of my way people! I'm running late for a Gerard Butler movie!" It was a silly little joke, a comment to kill time as we idled in the morning rush hour.

The first response came in right away: "said no one, ever," followed by a torrent of unexpected Butler hate.

One person called him a "bouncer actor," whatever that means.

Another questioned his ability to effectively disguise his native Scottish accent and many people offered me their condolences.

Why the Butler bashing?

It's true he is a frustrating movie star. He shares the usual leading man traits that have made Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio superstars.

He's handsome, talented and built like an action star but he's been done in time after time by poor choices.

Pitt makes Fight Club, Butler makes Law Abiding Citizen. Leo stars in The Departed, Gerard does Machine Gun Preacher. Years ago the website Gawker placed Butler on movie star probation, calling him a "professional bad decision maker" alongside notable career fritterers Cuba Gooding Jr. and John Travolta. A look at his IMDB page suggests they were on to something.

He's a utility player, comfortable switching genres the way most of us change our socks. One minute he's a romantic comedy star, the next he's choking out bad guys on screen. He's flirted with Shakespeare and provided voices for cartoons.

He's done sci-fi flicks, musicals and even a rendering of the Anglo-Saxon epic poem Beowulf.

It's not like he hasn't enjoyed some very big hits. In 300 he (and his meticulously crafted six-pack) played King Leonidas, a Spartan who led 300 soldiers against the might of the Persian army.

It's the film equivalent of a heavy metal concert — loud, brutal and completely uncompromising — and it made him an action hero.

People have a soft spot for Dear Frankie, his breakout film and the one that turned him into a heartthrob with serious dramatic chops. The four-hankie U.K. tear-jerker about a single mother who resorts to trickery to keep the memory of her late husband alive in her son's mind put Butler on the world stage.

Other box office bonanzas include playing a charming mobster in the violent Guy Ritchie flick RocknRolla and voicing Viking Stoick the Vast in How to Train Your Dragon.

It's the other stuff that seems to rub people the wrong way. As a movie reviewer I can attest there are few English language words more terrifying than "New Gerard Butler Romantic Comedy" and I think it is those films that turned my Twitter followers against him.

He's a good actor but his track record in the rom-com department is particularly grim.

Critics hate these movies, calling the handsome Scottish actor's attempts at mixing love and comedy, "instantly grating," and "embarrassingly limited."

But I come to praise Butler, not to bury him. Let's give him another chance.

I made it to the London Has Fallen screening and can tell you it's a pretty good action movie. Perhaps even good enough to erase the memory of The Ugly Truth or Playing for Keeps from our collective memories.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Zootopia	★★★★
London Has Fallen	★★★
Whiskey Tango Foxtrot	★★★
The Legend of Barney Thomson	★★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★ SEE IT
★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

Zootopia: The man behind the mammals

INTERVIEW

Canadian animator rising through ranks at Disney

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Disney animator Trent Correy may be an Ottawa native, but three years of living and working in Burbank, Calif., have changed him.

"I get home about once or twice a year now," he says. "It's hard to go in the winter, my body has adapted to here. I tend to send my parents photos of me on the beach in February when it is -42 C back home. I have flip flops on now while we're talking just to turn the knife a little bit."

Ironically the sun worshipper's breakout was helping to animate the snowman Olaf in Frozen. You've also seen his handiwork in Big Hero 6 and this weekend he's back with the furry and funny film Zootopia.

"The nice part of Zootopia was working with a number of different characters," says the Algonquin College graduate. "I worked with everything from a mouse to a sloth to an elephant. It kept the job very interesting."

Set in an alternate universe where animals, both predator and prey, live harmoniously in a city called Zootopia, the movie's funniest sequence involves a slow moving sloth named Flash. It was the first scene Correy helped animate. "There are a lot of challenges animating a sloth moving at that speed," he says, "and a lot of other challenges animating a mouse or an elephant with their different weights and animal attributes."

The 28-year-old is a rising star at Disney — he's currently working on the mythological epic Moana — so it might come as a surprise that he didn't take art in high school.

"I failed art," he admits. "It was totally my fault. I wasn't into the art history stuff at the time and I was really interested in drawing cartoons. That was looked upon as not real art so the teacher and myself had disagreements. I ended up having to take drama, and that's fun too.

"I did always love to draw. I have to thank my mom, who is an artist, who encouraged me to draw and keep going."

He rediscovered his passion for art after high school and now joins the rather long and impressive list of Canadians who are helping to shape the future of animation. I ask him why Canadians are so in demand as animators.

"There is a rich history of animation in Canada with the NFB and a lot of TV work in the '80s and '90s," he says. "I think a lot of it has to do with work ethic. I tend to see a lot of people who come from TV animation who are faster. They have to be because they get paid per frame in a lot of places in Canada, whereas here it's salary. So to make your money you have to be fast, you have to be efficient and you have to be economical in your choices.

"Our whole crew here is very international, we have people from all over the world. I think there is a bit of, 'I'm coming from a different country and I'm trying to prove myself in this big place.' It feels so far away from Ottawa."

LISTINGS WHERE TO CATCH ZOOTOPIA IN THEATRES

Bunny officer Judy Hopps has 48 hours to crack a case in the animated movie Zootopia. ALL PHOTOS HANDOUTS

Carlton (20 Carlton St.) Fri-Thurs 1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

Market Square (80 Front St.) Fri-Thurs 12:45 3:45 6:40 9:00

Yonge-Eglinton Centre (2300 Yonge St.) Thurs 7:15-10 3D Fri 2:20-5-7:40-10:25 Sat 11:30-12:10-3-5-7:40-10:25 Sun 11:45-2:20-5-7:40-10:25 Mon-Thurs 1:25-4:10-6:55-9:45

Yonge-Dundas (10 Dundas St. E.) Fri 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 IMAX 1:30-4-6:45-9:20; Sat-Sun 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 IMAX 11-1:40-4:20-7-9:40; Mon 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 IMAX 1:30-4-6:45-9:20; Tues 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 IMAX 1:30-4; Wed 11:40-2:20-5-7:40-10:20 IMAX 6:45-9:20; Thurs 11:40-2:20-5 IMAX 2-4:45-6:45-7:40-9:20-10:20

Queensway (1025 The Queensway) Fri 11-1:20-2:25-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sat 11-11:40-1:40-2:20-4:20-5-7-7:40-9:40-10:20 Sun 11:25-1:20-2:25-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Mon 1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Tues 1:25-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Wed:1-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Thurs: 1:25-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20

Woodbine Centre (500 Rexdale Blvd.) Fri-Thurs 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30

Humber Cinema (2442 Bloor St. W.) Fri 4:50, 7:15, 8:45 Sat-Sun 12:00-2:25-4:50,-7:15-8:45 Mon-Thurs 4:50-7:15,-8:45

Beach Cinemas (1651 Queen St. E.) Fri 4 Sat-Sun 11:50-2:30-5:10-7:45-10:15 Mon-Thurs 6:40-9:15

Empress Walk (5095 Yonge St.) Fri 1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sat 11:50-2:30-5:10-7:50-10:30 Sun 1:35-4:20-7:10-9:50 Mon 4:30-7:10-9:45 Tues 4:40-7:20-10:00 Wed 4:30-7:10-9:45 Thurs 4:40 7:10-9:45

Eglinton Town Centre (1901 Eglinton Ave. E.) Fri1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sat 11-11:40-1:40-2:20-4:20-5-7-7:40-9:40-10:20 Sun 11:55-1:20-2:30-4-5:05--6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Mon-Wed 4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Thurs 2-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20

SilverCity Yorkdale 6 (3401 Dufferin St.) Fri 11:45-1:15-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sat 11-11:40-1:15-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sun 11:30-12:30-2-3:30-4:45-6:30-7:30-9:10-10:15 Mon-Wed 1:45-4:45-7:30-10:15 Thurs 1:45-4:45-7:30-10:10

Silvercity Fairview (1800 Sheppard Ace. E.) Fri 11:30-12-2-4:40-7:20-9:55 Sat 11-12-1-4-5:20-6:45-9:30 Sun 11:30-12-2-4:40-7:20-9:55 Mon 1:30-4:05-6:40-9:20 Tues 12-1-4-6:40-9:20 Wed 1:30-4:05-6:40-9:20 Thurs 1:30-4:05-6:40-9:20

Coliseum Scarborough (300 Borough Dr.) Fri 1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sat 11:10-11:40-1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Sun 11:40-1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20 Mon-Thur 1:20-2:20-4-5-6:40-7:40-9:20-10:20

401 & Morningside (785 Milner Ave.) Fri 4:30-7:10-9:50 Sat 11:10-11:40-12:10-1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sun 1:40-12:10-1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Mon 5:30-8:05 Tues 4:30-7:10-9:50 Wed 5:30-8:05 Thurs 5:30-8:05

SCREEN TIMES ACCURATE AS OF NOON ON THRUSDAY, MARCH 3. CHECK THEATRES FOR ANY SCHEDULE CHANGES

Robert Carlyle directs, and stars alongside Emma Thompson in The Legend of Barney Thomson. HANDOUT

FEATURE

'Gleefully macabre' story gets adaptation

The Legend of Barney Thomson is a movie Robert Carlyle was destined to make. The Once Upon a Time star not only plays the lead character, he directed the Scottish black comedy about an awkward barber who unwittingly becomes a serial killer.

"I was offered this four or five times purely as an actor over a period of five or six years," he says. "I can't get away from it."

The script is based on The Long Midnight of Barney Thomson by Douglas Lindsay, a novel The Scotsman described as "gleefully macabre."

Carlyle, a Maryhill, Glasgow native, liked the screenplay but says, "there were certain aspects of Glasgow culture that were missing from it."

"In Glasgow we have a way of speaking to one another that is kind of harsh. That was missing." He drew from personal experience to find Glasgow sites that "fitted in with Barney's life."

"A lot of the locations you see in the film like the Barrowland Ballroom are places that are kind of dying and might not be around for much longer so I thought this was an interesting way of documenting some of these places."

Initially he signed on only as an actor but soon found himself doing double duty. "Believe me when I say, it certainly wasn't my idea," says Carlyle. "I can't remember but from whichever source it came from it seemed to be an interesting hook to hang this on that not only was I going to be in it but direct it also. That enthused the financiers."

The first time feature film director says he took his lead for the tone of the movie from the book and the script.

"Let's not have the camera moving around and spinning around in circles. Let's spend the time on the performances and not the camera angles, which you end up cutting anyway."

He recruited an all-star cast, including Sir Tom Courtney, Ray Winstone and his old Trainspotting cast mate James Cosmo. In a casting coup, he hired two time Oscar winner Emma Thompson to play against type as Barney's monstrous mom.

The Legend of Barney Thomson has already won Best Picture at the Scottish BAFTAs.

RICHARD CROUSE/FOR METRO

Tina Fey stars in Whiskey Tango Foxtrot, based on the book The Taliban Shuffle by Kim Barker. HANDOUT

War correspondent's book comes to big screen

INTERVIEW

Author's life made into a movie starring Tina Fey

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

"To be a good journalist you have to be a bit of a chameleon," says Kim Barker. "You have to be accepting of different cultures, different languages and different situations. I have always been the kind of person who feels like they can go into any situation and fit in."

In real life, Barker is a journalist who worked at the Chicago Tribune as a reporter and volunteered to become a foreign correspondent in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In reel life, she's played by Tina Fey in Whiskey Tango Foxtrot as an expatriate television journalist addicted to the rush of living and working in a war zone.

Whiskey Foxtrot Tango plays like Animal House with warlords, or maybe Fear and Loathing in Afghanistan, but Barker describes the reality of her time there in more poetic terms.

"In Afghanistan everything looks like a picture," says Barker. "Everything is so beautiful. The people are beautiful. The landscape is beautiful. You are surrounded by mountains when you're in Kabul. (The people) are very friendly, very direct with very good sense of humour. Also Afghanistan has men with long beards and pick up trucks and guns who hate the government. That is familiar to me. I grew up in Montana."

At the beginning of her time abroad Barker was a fish out of water but soon learned to culturally adapt and love the country.

"I remember on my second trip there meeting a guy who asked if I wanted to go fishing with him. I grew up fishing but fishing in Afghanistan is a little bit different because it usually involved throwing a grenade into the lake and stunning the fish or blowing them out of the water or using generator wires to electrocute them. That just doesn't seem very sporting to me."

Barker's book, The Taliban Shuffle came to Tina Fey shortly after a New York Times review mentioned Barker's similarity to the comedic actress.

"Tina Fey saw it," Barker says. "I think her people probably showed it to her or my people. I don't really have people but my agent sent it over to her people. She read the book and within two weeks of that review coming out she pushed Paramount and Lorne Michaels (who produced the movie) to option the book and make it into a movie.

"(People) said, 'Who's going to play you?' I said, 'A smart funny woman in Hollywood,' and everybody was like, 'Tina Fey?' It was everybody's first answer."

Barker describes having her life turned into a film as surreal.

"It's hard to even think about," she says, "people seeing this in a theatre. They are going to equate me with Kim Barker even though (that) Kim Barker is a version of me. It's fictionalized."

She says the film screenwriter Robert Carlock told her early on that they would have to "Hollywood this up." Changes to the basic story were made, and when they sent her a final copy of the script in 2014 she couldn't bring herself to read it. Finally her best friend read the script "to make sure it is not going to embarrass you."

"She read it and said, 'It's fine. It's good. It's really good. You're probably not going to like parts of it because it makes you seem more heroic than you think of yourself.' She was absolutely right. I'm not that brave."

Afghanistan has men with long beards and pick up trucks and guns who hate the government. That is familiar to me. I grew up in Montana.
Kim Barker, journalist

FEUD

Simone estate slams casting call in biopic

If there was any doubt about how Nina Simone's family feels about the upcoming biopic starring Zoe Saldana, recent social media posts make it clear they are not pleased.

A fresh round of criticism for the film erupted after the trailer and poster for Nina were unveiled Wednesday.

Saldana posted a quote from the singer and civil rights activist on Twitter, and Simone's estate responded with: "Cool story but please take Nina's name out your mouth. For the rest of your life."

Simone's daughter and others have decried the choice to cast a light-skinned actress as the African-American activist since Saldana took the part in 2012. Her skin was apparently darkened for the role.

At the time, Simone's daughter, Simone Kelly, said: "Appearance-wise this is not the best choice."

"My mother was raised at a time when she was told her nose was too wide, her skin was too dark," Kelly told the New York Times in a 2012 interview.

The Simone estate tweeted Wednesday: "Hopefully people begin to understand this is painful. Gut-wrenching, heartbreaking, nauseating, soul-crushing. It shall pass, but for now..."

The singer's estate co-operated with producers of the Netflix documentary What Happened, Miss Simone? which was nominated for an Oscar this year.

Robert L. Johnson, founder and chairman of the studio releasing Nina, describes Saldana's performance as "an exceptional and mesmerizing tribute."

"She gave her heart and soul to the role and displayed her extraordinary talent," he said in a statement Thursday.

"The most important thing is that creativity or quality of performance should never be judged on the basis of colour, or ethnicity, or physical likeness."

Representatives for Saldana and the Simone estate did not respond to requests for comment Thursday.

RLJ Entertainment will release Nina in theatres, digital HD and video on demand on April 22. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

Knowing that Downton was soon to end, I got curious. Have Anna and Bates found happiness at long last?

When Downton Abbey concludes on March 6, there's little chance the series finale will abruptly cut to black, followed by excruciating silence, leaving loyal fans wondering if Lord Grantham got whacked. It would be preposterous — and not only because David Chase already did that back in 2007 when he ended The Sopranos but also because Downton's creator Julian Fellowes knows his fans: they would not tolerate an ambiguous ending whose meaning (like Chase's) could be debated for eternity. They want a happy conclusion, preferably bow-tied by the likes of Mr. Carson.

Over six seasons, the British drama has chronicled the lives lived both upstairs and downstairs in the Georgian-era country home. Simon and I used to watch Downton together. But when plots started to approximate soap operas as in both length and content — Anna and Mr. Bates have to be two of the unluckiest characters ever on TV — no amount of tea cups, gorgeous Edwardian costuming and posh accents could help make the show feel more than a guilty pleasure. We tuned out.

But knowing that Downton was soon to end, I got curious. What has Mrs. Patmore been cooking up in the kitchen? Did Lady Sybil come back from the dead? Have Anna and Bates found happiness at long last? So I read some episode recaps, skipped straight ahead to Season 6, and breathed a sigh of relief to see that the Dowager Countess, played by Dame Maggie Smith, hadn't lost her penchant for acerbic aphorisms.

THE SERIES: Downton Abbey

THE MEAL: An alone-time dinner

It looks like Thomas Barrow, "the most consistent plotter of nefarious schemes for nearly all six seasons of the show," as Vulture recently put it, may have atoned for past sins and be redeemed. And yes, there are still over-the-top sensational moments: in Episode 5 Lord Grantham's ulcer takes a turn for the worse and he literally starts spewing blood from his mouth during dinner.

But I did my catching up solo: Simon refused to return to Downton. So on Sunday night I'll tune in with an alone-time dinner. That's what I call a meal I'd never make for anyone else but me; simple food you'd be embarrassed to serve — even to your judgement-free partner — on account of it not approximating what most of us think of as dinner. For me, this is a green salad with thin slices of raw, red onion, some tangy goat cheese and a lemon dressing served alongside a big fat piece of baguette with butter and a crisp, dry white wine.

I already know how I want Downton to end. Imagine we flash forward to today when tour groups are being lead through the seemingly endless rooms by the current owners. They make their money by opening up the home; is a bit of meta realism considering this is how most of England's great country estates survive today — including Highclere Castle which doubles as Downton. A little boy on the tour notices a photo on the wall of Lady Mary. 'What happened to her?' he will ask. The new Lord will explain, and so on so forth, until the sepia-toned portraits of a vanished era have yielded lives fully lived. "All life is a series of problems which we must try and solve, first one and then the next and then the next," as the Dowager said, "until at last we die."

But I'm not holding my breath.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

DO A 'W' TAKE

After six seasons, people get it: The name is Downton Abbey. Not 'Downtown' Abbey. So why not a less risky title for the series? Julian Fellowes explains:

"I have always been rather an admirer of my great-grandfather, Professor John Wrightson, 1840-1916, who was an experimental agriculturalist.

"His eldest brother, Sir Thomas Wrightson, Bart., of Neasham Hall in Yorkshire, had done great things in the world of steel and their aunt was married to Lord Armstrong, the British Krupp of armaments, but John was more interested in farming.

"He had an estate in Wiltshire called Charford Manor and I thought of calling the series 'Charford Abbey,' but we decided it was too near Cranford, and so we settled on 'Downton' after Downton College of Agriculture which Wrightson founded in 1880 and which, for a quarter of a century, was at the forefront of agricultural innovation."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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DO YOU KNOW A SPECIAL NURSE?

Nominate a nurse for the 15th Annual Toronto Star Nightingale Award

Submit your nomination including the following information:

- First and last name of the nurse
- Your name and daytime telephone number
- Specify hospital, ward, health care location, department or organization where the care or association with the nurse took place
- Approximate dates of care provided or date of association with the nurse
- Your relationship to the nurse (i.e. patient, family member of patient, friend of patient, former student or colleague).

Provide a personal account, in 250-500 words, explaining why this nurse deserves to be recognized with the Nightingale Award. This may include a brief description of his or her qualities, care of patient, specific examples of the nurse's efforts and dedication, and the difference he or she has made to your life or the lives of others.
NOTE: Your account must have taken place between January 1, 2015 and February 29, 2016. Nominee must be registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario. Nurses may not be nominated by a member of their family.

Send your nomination to: Nightingale Award Nomination, One Yonge Street, 5th Floor, Toronto, ON M5E 1E6. Or online at: **thestar.com/nightingale**

Deadline for nominations: March 16, 2016

metro TRAVEL
Your essential daily news

NASA photos of the moon are on display at the U.S. National Air and Space Museum

Thousands of years on ice

ATLANTIC CANADA

Newfoundland's Iceberg Alley is full of great white wonder

Nature's frozen carvings drift through Iceberg Alley each spring and summer but early arrivals near Newfoundland's eastern shores have already lit up social media.

Eric Abbott did a double take in mid-January when he first saw a giant slab off Elliston, N.L. Since then, his photos of it and another water-sculpted berg off the pretty coastal town of Bonavista have drawn admirers from around the province and beyond.

"Most of the time I've seen them in March or April," he said in an interview. "There's people saying 'Eric, you think they'll be there in March month?' I say: 'My darling, the one in Elliston is grounded, it's only shifting back and forth. I allow it'll be there in August.'"

Many Newfoundlanders who posted photos of an iceberg spotted in mid-February off Signal Hill in St. John's said it's the earliest they can remember big ice showing up.

Byron Briggs, superintendent of Atlantic region ice operations for the Canadian Coast Guard, said it's not unusual to have icebergs off Newfoundland's east coast this time of year.

"The difference being this time, some of them are close enough to shore for people to see. In 2014 there were definitely more bergs than there are now, but most of them were about 100 miles off."

Only ships out to sea would have caught a glimpse, Briggs said in an interview. Icebergs have to be within about 20 kilometres of shore to be visible from land, he added.

Gabrielle McGrath, commander of the United States Coast Guard International Ice Patrol, has done recent surveillance flights over the region. The patrol was formed after the Titanic disaster in 1912, and works with Canadian partners to track icebergs in North Atlantic shipping lanes.

More than 20 bergs have so far been spotted in those lanes and many more originating from Greenland glaciers are heading south, McGrath said in an interview.

"It's hard to give a prediction exactly, but I think there is a potential to have a decent amount of icebergs this year."

McGrath said an interesting weather pattern of cold and warm spells combined with storm systems help explain a few things. "Some of the bergs have been pushed onshore maybe a little earlier than they would in the past."

Icebergs photographed close to Newfoundland and Labrador coastlines in past years have reached 45 metres in height while long, flat tabular giants have been estimated at five kilometres in length or more. Waves mould them into spectacular shapes that resemble cathedrals, pyramids and glass archways streaked with blue — and sometimes running with waterfalls. They are believed to be at least 12,000-year-old specimens of pure water.

Cecil Stockley, owner and operator of Iceberg Man tours in Twillingate on Newfoundland's northeast coast, takes groups out starting in May. In recent years he has hosted visitors from across North and Central America and as far away as Russia, China and Japan. "They come looking for icebergs.," he said.

To avoid disappointment, Stockley urges tourists to check in with local operators before they make the trip.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

An iceberg near Bonavista, N.L. on Feb. 13. THE CANADIAN PRESS

IF YOU GO

For tips on travel to Newfoundland and Labrador go to newfoundlandlabrador.com

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Aran Islands offer a poetic escape

WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Islands off Ireland's west coast embody literary charm

The picturesque Aran Islands are well worth a detour from your Ireland sightseeing. ISTOCK

Give up Paris, the Irish poet W.B. Yeats told fellow writer J.M. Synge, and go to the Aran Islands in order to "express a life that has never found expression."

The budding playwright took the advice and travelled to the Aran Islands off Ireland's west coast. He returned full of ideas, incorporating island ways and dialect into works such as his lyrical play, Riders to the Sea.

Things have changed a bit since Synge made his pilgrimage in 1898, but even today this rocky outpost in Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way remains a place to find respite from modern life and move to a simpler rhythm.

Many visitors treat the islands as a day trip, taking the ferry or flight from Galway. But to really experience the islands' charms, consider spending a few nights. Multiple B&Bs offer reasonable rates.

There are three islands. Most visitors go to the largest, Inishmore. The other two, Inisheer and Inishmaan (the latter is the setting for Riders to the Sea), are smaller and less-visited, and can be reached by ferry for day trips from Inishmore.

Here are some basics on planning your trip.

Set the mood

Synge's The Aran Islands, a book of essays, is fun to dip into. Another classic is the 1934 fictional documentary, Man of Aran, which took some liberties with historical accuracy. More recently, island scenery was featured in the opening to the '90s sitcom Father Ted, which is commemorated by the annual Tedfest, held each February.

Need an adrenaline rush with your research? The Red Bull Cliff Diving series has twice held events at Inishmore's Serpent's Lair.

Getting there

Aran Island Ferries run from Rossaveal, a one-hour drive from Galway, and take about 45 minutes for the crossing. There's also ferry service from Doolin near the Cliffs of Moher on the west coast of County Clare. Aer Arann offers short flights from Connemara with shuttle service from downtown Galway to the airport and a shuttle on the other end to the village of Kilronan. However you go, book in advance.

Getting around

You can rent a bike at the harbour in Kilronan and go your own way. Or you can take a minivan tour; vans meet the ferries. For a more leisurely approach, try a pony trap tour.

If you have enough time, there's a lot to be said for simply walking and stopping to smell the wildflowers — and say hello to the occasional sheep. The islands are strewn with ruins and miles of stone walls. Be prepared for all types of weather; bring layers and waterproof outerwear. It may pour in the morning, then turn sunny and warm by afternoon.

Sightseeing

The big attraction on Inishmore is Dun Aonghasa, (aka Dun Angus), a prehistoric cliff top stronghold with four sets of dry stone walls and a "chevaux de frise," a band of jagged upright stones meant to deter attackers (open daily 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in winter and until 6 p.m. in summer, admission is about $5).

Also worth a look is Dun Duchathair, the Black Fort. Not much is left of the fort but it has a breathtaking coastal setting. The Serpent's Lair, of Red Bull fame, is a naturally formed pool connected to the ocean by an underwater channel. The rocks can be slippery; wear shoes with good soles.

The Aran Sweater Market in Kilronan sells garments knit in the famous Aran pattern as well as yarn and patterns for the crafty.

In Inishmaan, you can visit the cottage where Synge stayed.

Food

The quality of the food may come as a pleasant surprise. You'll find delicious fresh fish and hearty specialties like Irish stew and Guinness chocolate cake. Popular spots on Inishmore include Teach Nan Phaidi and Ti Joe Watty's, which has live music weekends and throughout the summer. The economically named The Bar pub serves a stew that will restore you if you've spent the day hiking. The Pier House Restaurant has an elegant dining room with a view.

Accommodations

The Aran Islands Hotel has rooms with balconies and views, starting at around $85. The Seacrest B&B has rooms with baths for about $60 a night including a full Irish breakfast. Seacrest co-owner Thomas Faherty gives excellent pony-and-trap tours of the island.

Will your stay in the islands awake your inner genius? Hard to say. But you may find yourself feeling the way Synge did one evening as he strolled along Galway Bay and looked westward.

"The sort of yearning I feel towards those lonely rocks," he wrote, "is indescribably acute."

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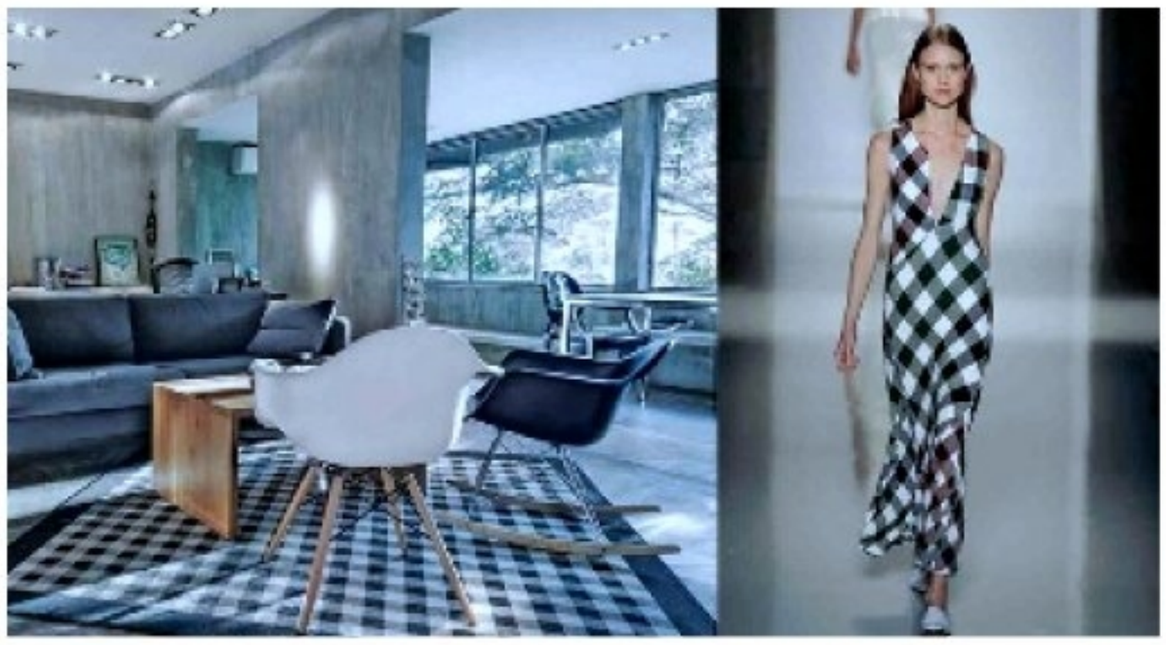
STAY MATCH YOUR DRESS WITH WHERE YOU REST

Can't bear to clash with the carpet? Airbnb has an apartment for that. For fashionistas who are sticklers for coordination, Airbnb has rounded up a list of fabulous rentals that match designer decor with fashion weeks around the globe. AFP



ALL PHOTOS AFP

Pretty in plaid

To go with a flowey, vichy-checked dress from the Victoria Beckham 2016 spring/summer collection, there's a loft in Bangkok where a black and white checkered carpet offsets an industrial, slate grey loft.

Bohemian like you

Is your style more Bohemian princess, à la Manish Arora's spring/summer collection? When in the south of France, look up a gypsy caravan decked out in unapologetically bold turquoises, bright fuschias and shabby chic patterns that match the boho chic ethos.

Stripes and stripes forever

But if you're more of a minimalist, à la Alice and Olivia's black and white-striped pant suit, there's an Osaka rental that will match the outfit perfectly, with its stark monochromatic décor: striped walls, zebra head, clean and minimal lines.

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TRAVEL NOTES OUTSIDER ART, CAMPER VANS, CACTUS LEAGUE

Outsider art museum opens in The Netherlands

A museum of outsider art is opening March 17 as part of the Hermitage Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Outsider art is art created by self-taught artists, unknowns and others outside the art establishment. It is also variously referred to as folk art, art brut and raw art. The new venture is a project of the Het Dolhuys in Haarlem, a museum of psychiatry, in partnership with other organizations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Hermitage Amsterdam will feature a museum of outsider art. ISTOCK

Company rents out VW campers

Planning a road trip in a camper? Consider a set of old-school wheels. A Seattle-based company, Peace Vans Rentals, has fully restored Volkswagen camper vans, all Westfalia models built between 1987 and 1991. They sleep up to four adults and come with a built-in stove, sink and storage space. Included with the rental are cookware, utensils and headlamps, and a French press.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

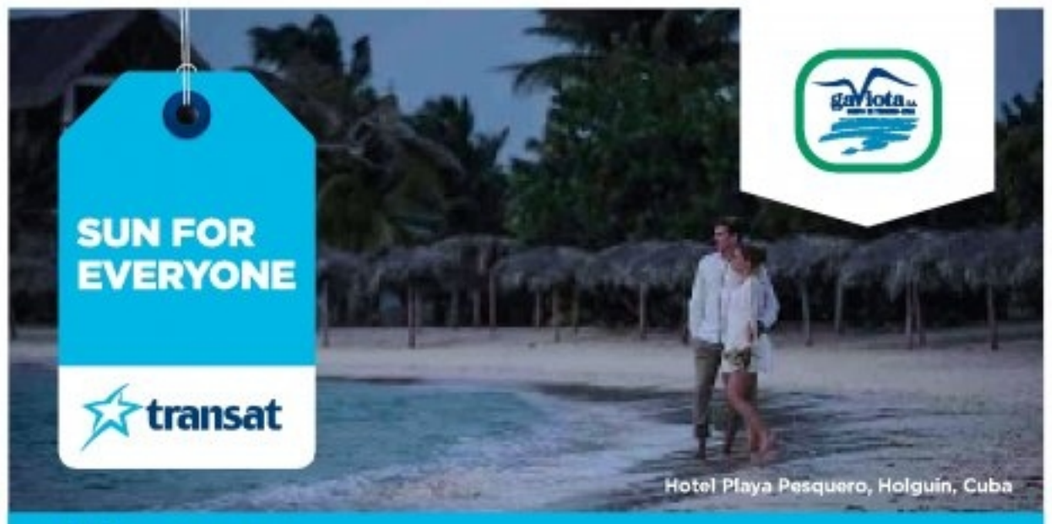
Peace Van Rentals has restored old-school campers. HANDOUT

Behold the Cactus League games

Arizona is getting ready for spring training season. Fifteen Major League Baseball teams play around the Phoenix metropolitan area as part of what's called the Cactus League. Spring training in Arizona has been a tradition since the 1940s when the Cleveland Indians and the New York Giants were the only teams that practiced there. The games run through April 2 in advance of MLB's opening day, April 3.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yu Darvish at training. FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM



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metro SPORTS

"Yeah, I don't care": LeBron James' reaction to those who are upset about his recent visit with Dwyane Wade in Miami

Raps look to regain defensive footing

James Johnson has averaged almost 16 minutes for the Raptors this season. RON TURENNE/NBAE VIA GETTY IMAGES

NBA

Tough forward Johnson key to getting stops for Toronto

It's basically a constant companion, like a pet but without any of the fun or cuteness, and James Johnson is quite fine with it.

It's something akin to a walking boot, a contraption he wears at home when he's relaxing and when he's out and chilling and when he's wandering around the Toronto Raptors locker-room before and after every game.

The boot is for a bit of comfort and a lot of prevention as the team's rugged forward deals with plantar fasciitis in his left foot that's more a nuisance than debilitating.

"It's not going to go away, there's nothing you can do about it ... (I) just keep it on there to keep my foot at a certain angle," Johnson said Thursday.

"It just feels better. It doesn't get tight, it stays stretched and when I'm in the game, I don't feel it at all. I'm just wearing it for cautionary reasons."

The pain hasn't had a deleterious impact on Johnson's play, and the last thing he'd ever do is use it as an excuse. He's still the team's toughest and most versatile wing defender.

"One thing James has been doing is guarding the best offensive player on the other team," coach Dwane Casey said. "If he has an open shot he's got the green light to take it, but his job is to come in and slow down the opposing three-man or the opposing big two.

"You go from not playing to a role of coming in to be a defensive stopper. He has a difficult job but that's his role."

The Raptors have had a defensive drop-off in the last 10 days, but it's somewhat skewed statistically by a truly awful performance Sunday in Detroit.

"We're still in the top 12, 13 but we can't allow the trend to continue," Casey said.

And Johnson's ability to guard multiple positions — and the emergence of Patrick Patterson as an answer against bigger, small forwards — is key. If he has to wear a contraption on his foot when he's not playing, so be it.

"When you wake up, it feels like burning and needles all in one spot. You have to wake up and give it a stretch before you can even walk around," Johnson said.

"It's no excuse at all ... it feels good but sometimes it tightens up and I put the boot on to prevent that."

The Raptors host the Portland Trail Blazers on Friday before a visit from the Houston Rockets on Sunday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Justin Smoak rounds the bases Thursday. LEON HALIP/GETTY IMAGES

SPRING TRAINING

Floyd solid as Jays get win over Pirates

Finally healthy after a three-year battle with injuries, right-hander Gavin Floyd turned in a solid start for the Toronto Blue Jays on Thursday in a 10-8 win against the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Justin Smoak hit a towering solo home run for the Blue Jays.

Floyd worked two innings and gave up one run on two hits. He walked one and struck out two.

The 33-year-old Floyd had Tommy John surgery in 2013. While working his way back, he twice snapped a bone in his elbow.

"I expect to attack, but that wasn't the case today," Floyd said. "I'll make adjustments and start making quality pitches. I knew I was going to be amped up. The longer you're out there, the more you calm down."

Floyd has pitched a total of 21 games in the majors over the last three seasons with the White Sox, Braves and Indians. He has a shot to make Toronto's rotation, but could end up in the bullpen.

"I want to be a starter. That's my comfort zone," he said. "I'm treating this as a spring when I'm getting ready for the season. It's all going to play out. Whether I'm in the bullpen of the starting rotation, I'm just glad to be back."

Mike Morse's RBI double gave the Pirates a 1-0 lead in the first inning.

The Blue Jays put six straight runners on base with two outs in the second and scored four runs off Pirates newcomer Jon Niese. Michael Saunders hit a two-run single. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SWITCH PITCH

Blue Jays reliever Pat Venditte, a switch-pitcher, faced two switch-hitters in a perfect sixth inning. "We really want to see how he is against lefties," manager John Gibbons said. "We know we can use him a lot because he throws with both arms."

NHL

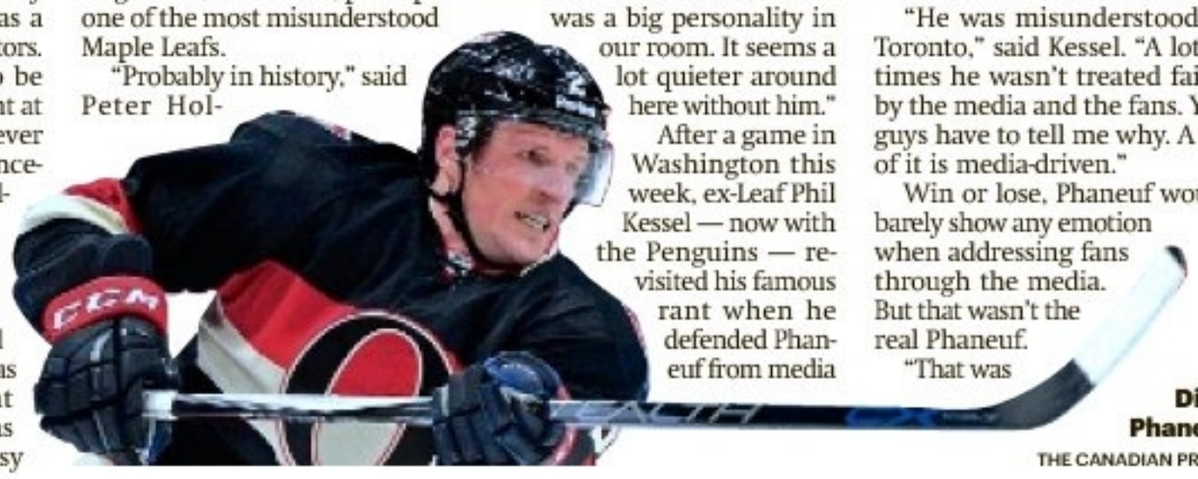
'We all loved Dion': Leafs to face former captain for first time

Dion Phaneuf returns Saturday to the Air Canada Centre as a member of the Ottawa Senators.

The response is sure to be muted from a crowd — silent at the best of times — that never fully warmed to the defenceman. He was no guts-and-glory Wendel Clark. He was no dazzling Doug Gilmour. He was no calm-but-wow Mats Sundin.

Phaneuf, a lightning rod for malcontent Leaf fans, was a symbol of all that went wrong during his tenure as captain. Phaneuf was an easy target and, as a result, perhaps one of the most misunderstood Maple Leafs.

"Probably in history," said Peter Holland. "We all loved Dion. He was a big personality in our room. It seems a lot quieter around here without him."



Dion Phaneuf

THE CANADIAN PRESS

After a game in Washington this week, ex-Leaf Phil Kessel — now with the Penguins — revisited his famous rant when he defended Phaneuf from media attacks.

"He was misunderstood in Toronto," said Kessel. "A lot of times he wasn't treated fairly by the media and the fans. You guys have to tell me why. A lot of it is media-driven."

Win or lose, Phaneuf would barely show any emotion when addressing fans through the media. But that wasn't the real Phaneuf.

"That was a persona he had to put on as captain, having that spotlight, having that attention," said Nazem Kadri. "You don't want to be saying the wrong thing when you're captain, being scrutinized, having things taken out of context. He was very conscious about that.

"He was a super-energetic guy to hang out with. Always laughing. Jokes. He was serious when things had to be done. He was the first one to get down to business. At the same time, he could loosen up and have some fun, too." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Things could have fallen apart a lot worse if he was not there.

Maple Leafs forward Nazem Kadri

Phil Mickelson jokes with fans as he walks onto the ninth hole during the first round of the World Golf Championships-Cadillac Championship. MIKE EHRMANN/GETTY IMAGES

Mickelson figures out new-look Doral

GOLF

American star is third and seeking first win since 2013

Phil Mickelson's scores from Doral over the past two years clearly suggested that the redesigned Blue Monster wasn't completely to his liking.

He had to re-learn a course that he played for more than 20 years, and indicated Thursday that he finally has the new Doral figured out.

Mickelson shot a 5-under 67 on Thursday in the opening round of the Cadillac Championship, the first World Golf Championships event of the year. Seeking his first win since the British Open in 2013, Mickelson made seven birdies and finished the day one shot back of leaders Scott Piercy and Marcus Fraser.

"There is a bit of a learning curve on some of the contours and where you have to go and the best place to be," Mickelson said. "It's not like I came in here weeks before and mapped it out like a major. You're here only the week of. But this is our third year here now and it continues to get better each year."

Fraser had seven birdies before his lone bogey of the day, and Piercy also got to 7 under at one point before settling for his 66. Mickelson made bogey only twice, immediately erasing each with a birdie on the following hole, and the 67 was nearly six full shots better than his average round score at Doral in his previous two visits.

His best round on the Blue Monster in 2014 was a 69, and his low score at Doral last year was 71.

"It was a good day," said Mickelson, who feigned disbelief when his chip on the par-5 8th — his 17th of the day — stopped inches from the hole, leaving him a tap-in birdie. "I hit a lot of good shots, made some good putts and just drove it well, enjoyed the day."

Danny Willett, Adam Scott, Jason Dufner and Charley Hoffman were all two shots back of Piercy, each carding 68s. World No. 1 Jordan Spieth was in a group another shot back, three off the pace at 3 under, and said that even on a relatively calm day by Doral weather standards, it felt like a grind.

> **"There is a bit of a learning curve on some of the contours.**
> Phil Mickelson on the redesigned Doral course

"It always is here," Spieth said. "And this would be a day that should play about as easy as it possibly can with just a 5- to 10-mile-an-hour breeze. The standard wind here I think. Still, the scores aren't extremely low."

Spieth was in a featured group, with world No. 2 Jason Day and No. 3 Rory McIlroy with him. McIlroy shot 1 under, Day finished at even par.

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5 REASONS MLS IS ON THE RISE

With hot topics like expansion and labour negotiations taken care of in 2015, soccer itself is set to take the spotlight. Coupled with the Copa America in June and the Olympics in August, MLS is expecting one of the biggest summer's ever for the sport in North America. Here are some of the storylines heading into the domestic league competition:

1 Timbers' title has nice timbre to it

It seemed inevitable that an MLS Cup champion would eventually come from the soccer-crazed Pacific Northwest.

The Timbers capped their run to the title by beating Columbus 2-1 in the final last December and immediately drew the ire of their bigger-spending, bigger-stadium rivals to the north in Seattle.

And Portland could be just as good again, returning the majority of its key pieces from the title run.

2 East beasts

New York Red Bulls put together a masterful run last season to win the Supporters' Shield before getting bounced in the playoffs by Columbus. The Red Bulls return very much intact while many other teams in the East have questions to answer.

Toronto and Montreal may be ready to rise, and New England, led by **Lee Nguyen**, could be the type of team to jump from fifth to the top of the conference.

3 Frosty favourites

The three Canadian clubs could all be among the best this season. Toronto finally made the playoffs in 2015 thanks to league MVP **Sebastian Giovinco** and American standouts Michael Bradley and Jozy Altidore. Montreal welcomed **Didier Drogba** into the fold during the summer and made a powerful late run into the post-season. And ,led by **Octavio Rivero's** 10 goals, Vancouver was near the top of the Western Conference all season.

Giovinco, Bradley and Altidore are all back with Toronto; the currently-injured Drogba is ready for a longer season in Montreal; and Vancouver have among the deepest rosters in the league. It could be the year a Canadian club makes a run at the title.

4 Western shootout

The Western Conference again appears to be significantly deeper than the East. Consider that Portland may be the fifth- or sixth-best team at the beginning of the season. Vancouver could end up being the class, but young FC Dallas is only going to get better with experience after nearly making the MLS Cup final. Led by **Benny Feilhaber**, Sporting Kansas City may have the best midfield in the league, and the talent in Seattle's starting 11 can rival anyone's.

5 New arrivals

MLS again was able to tap into overseas leagues to bring in some notable names for the 2016 season including **Ashley Cole** and Nigel de Jong in Los Angeles; Antonio Nocerino at Orlando City; and Shkelzen Gashi in Colorado. The biggest moves involving American players came with one arrival and one departure. New York Red Bulls saw young defender Matt Miazga leave for Chelsea, but Seattle was able to convince Jordan Morris to stay at home and sign with the Sounders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/
PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

TORONTO FC AT RED BULLS

Reds open on road in unfriendly New Jersey confines

Toronto FC couldn't ask for a better opening test than a visit to the New York Red Bulls to kick off the MLS season Sunday.

The Red Bulls won the Supporters' Shield for best regular-season record in MLS in 2013 (17-9-8) and 2015 (18-10-6). And they have owned Toronto at Red Bull Arena, posting a 9-1-1 record while outscoring TFC 31-7.

Toronto's all-time road record is a woeful 22-90-33 so any success away from home has been rare, although it has been better the last two seasons with four away wins apiece. But Red Bull Arena has been a TFC graveyard.

Toronto, which boasts a solid 5-3-4 record against New York at BMO Field, has lost more games at the Red Bulls' home than anywhere else in the league.

"It's a good team.... Certainly the way they play will mean it's a hard fast game. It's a great stadium to play in," said Toronto captain Michael Bradley.

Reds head coach Greg Vanney says star striker Jozy Altidore, who is nursing a hamstring, is doubtful for Sunday but could be ready for the March 13 visit to New York City FC.

On the plus side, fullback Steven Beitashour is back training after missing a spell with a quad strain. And Vanney says everyone else is healthy.

TFC are being patient with Jozy Altidore and his hurting hamstring. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

At practice Thursday, Toronto featured a back four of Justin Morrow, Drew Moor, Damien Perquis and Beitashour with Bradley in the midfield alongside Toronto's Will Johnson and Jonathan Osorio with a front three of Dan Lovitz, reigning MVP Sebastian Giovinco and rookie Tsubasa Endoh.

Clint Irwin will make his debut in the Toronto goal.

Irwin, Moor, Johnson and Beitashour — all MLS veterans — were the major Toronto additions since last season.

"Toronto's done a really good job with their roster this off-season," Red Bulls coach Jesse Marsch said this week. "I think probably more than anyone else.

"We expect them to present a big challenge on Sunday."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

8

For the second year in a row, TFC faces an extended road trip to open the season because of renovations to BMO Field. They will play eight games away from home before hosting FC Dallas on May 7.

Croatian midfielder Ivan Rakitic slots home Barcelona's first goal off a misplay by Rayo Vallecano goalkeeper Juan Carlos on Thursday in Madrid. FRANCISCO SECO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barça rout Rayo and break La Liga record

IN SPAIN

Messi hat trick helps Catalans earn longest unbeaten run

Lionel Messi scored a hat trick as Barcelona defeated nine-man Rayo Vallecano 5-1 to become the first Spanish club to play 35 consecutive matches without a loss, breaking Real Madrid's record of nearly three decades ago.

Midfielder Ivan Rakitic opened the scoring, Messi added the second, third and fourth goals, and Arda Turan topped it off late.

Rayo had two players sent off with straight red cards, Diego Llorente when they were 2-0 behind, and Manuel Iturra at 3-1 down. Luis Suarez missed a penalty kick with his team up 3-1. It was Barcelona's 10th win in a row in the Spanish league, keeping it eight points ahead of second-place Atletico Madrid, which defeated Real Sociedad 3-0 on Tuesday.

35

Number of consectutive matches the Catalan giants have gone without a loss.

Real Madrid remained 12 points behind after defeating last-place Levante 3-1 on Wednesday.

Real Madrid's record of 34 unbeaten games was set under coach Leo Beenhakker and with players such as Emilio Butragueno and Hugo Sanchez. That run ended in a 2-0 loss at Celta Vigo in 1989.

Barcelona earlier this year had already broken its own club record of 29 games without a loss in all competitions, a mark that had been set by Pep Guardiola's squad in 2011. Luis Enrique's team hasn't lost since a 2-1 defeat at Sevilla in the league's seventh round in October. Barcelona tied Real Madrid's offence as the best in the league this season with 74 goals scored in 27 games.

Messi started his scoring spree just a minute after Rakitic's opener on a pass by Neymar inside the box, then added another shortly after the interval when Suarez struck the post, and netted his third from close range. The Argentine star, who had a goal disallowed in the ninth minute, now has 19 league goals.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COURT

Pistorius murder appeal dismissed

Oscar Pistorius GETTY IMAGES

South Africa's highest court has dismissed Oscar Pistorius' appeal of his murder conviction, a lawyer said Thursday, signalling that the former track star's long legal battle since he killed girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp may be drawing to a close.

The ruling by the constitutional Court clears the way for a judge to sentence the double-amputee runner for murder at a hearing scheduled for April 18.

"We'll proceed to the sentencing," defence lawyer Andrew Fawcett said.

Pistorius, who killed Steenkamp in 2013, had appealed to the constitutional Court, saying another court erred when it overturned a manslaughter conviction and declared the Olympic athlete guilty of murder.

Pistorius spent one year of a five-year sentence in jail for the lesser offence. He is currently under house arrest, staying at his uncle's mansion in Pretoria.

The minimum sentence for murder in South Africa is 15 years, though a judge can reduce that sentence for what the law describes as exceptional circumstances.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Hodgson says Rooney a Euro 2016 shoo-in if fit

According to England coach Roy Hodgson, Wayne Rooney is guaranteed to make the England squad for the European Championship if he recovers in time from his right knee injury.

Speaking at a UEFA coaches' workshop in Paris, Hodgson said he won't judge his captain on his form when picking his 23-man list. Manchester United striker Rooney injured the ligaments in his knee last month. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Court debate may lead to 'Deflategate' ban for Brady

NFL union lawyers who want Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to put "Deflategate" behind him for good are ready to make their pitch to a New York court.

NFL lawyers are asking the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals Thursday to reinstate the league's four-game suspension of Brady. They say a lower-court was wrong to rule that the league bungled a probe of deflated footballs at the 2015 AFC Championship game.

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CURLING

Field stacked for Brier

Winnipeg skip Mike McEwen picked a tough year to make his long-awaited Tim Hortons Brier debut.

The field is stacked for the upcoming Canadian men's curling championship at TD Place in Ottawa. Reigning Olympic champion Brad Jacobs of Northern Ontario, two-time Brier champ Kevin Koe of Alberta, top-ranked Brad Gushue of Newfoundland and Labrador and four-time world champion Glenn Howard of Ontario are some of the headliners.

Other contenders include defending champion Pat Simmons and his Team Canada rink along with B.C.'s Jim Cotter, Quebec's Jean-Michel Menard and Saskatchewan's Steve Laycock.

"There is probably six, seven or eight teams that have a legitimate shot," McEwen said.

Prince Edward Island's Adam Casey and New Brunswick's Mike Kennedy have also secured berths in the main draw, which begins Saturday afternoon at the 10,000-seat venue. The 12th and final spot goes to the winner of a qualification round-robin between Nova Scotia's Jamie Murphy, Bob Smallwood of the Yukon, Jamie Koe of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut's Wade Kingdon.

The gold medallist will represent Canada at the April 2-10 world men's curling championship in Basel, Switzerland. Simmons won bronze at last year's world playdowns in Halifax.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mike McEwen
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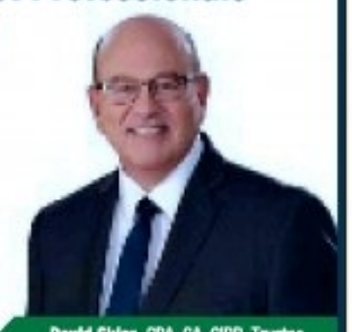
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RECIPE Protein Pancakes with Cottage Cheese

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

If you love breakfast for dinner (it's our favourite) then prepare to have your mind blown. These pancakes deliver, wait for it, a nice dose of protein thank you to the addition of cottage cheese. Also, did we mention they are pancakes?

Ready in
Prep time: 5 minutes
Total time: 30 minutes
Makes 6 pancakes

Ingredients
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp fine sea salt
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 3/4 cup low-fat milk
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- Butter for pan

Directions
1. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour, baking soda, sea salt and cinnamon.
2. In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs, cottage cheese, milk and oil.
3. Add the egg mixture to the flour and whisk until just combined.
4. Heat a large skillet or griddle over medium high heat and then toss in a pat of butter. Working in batches, form each pancake by pouring about 1/4 cup of batter into the pan. Cook pancakes until they are golden brown and bubbles break on the surface; then flip. Allow to cook through, about another minute. Serve with either maple syrup or a spoonful of Greek yogurt and honey.

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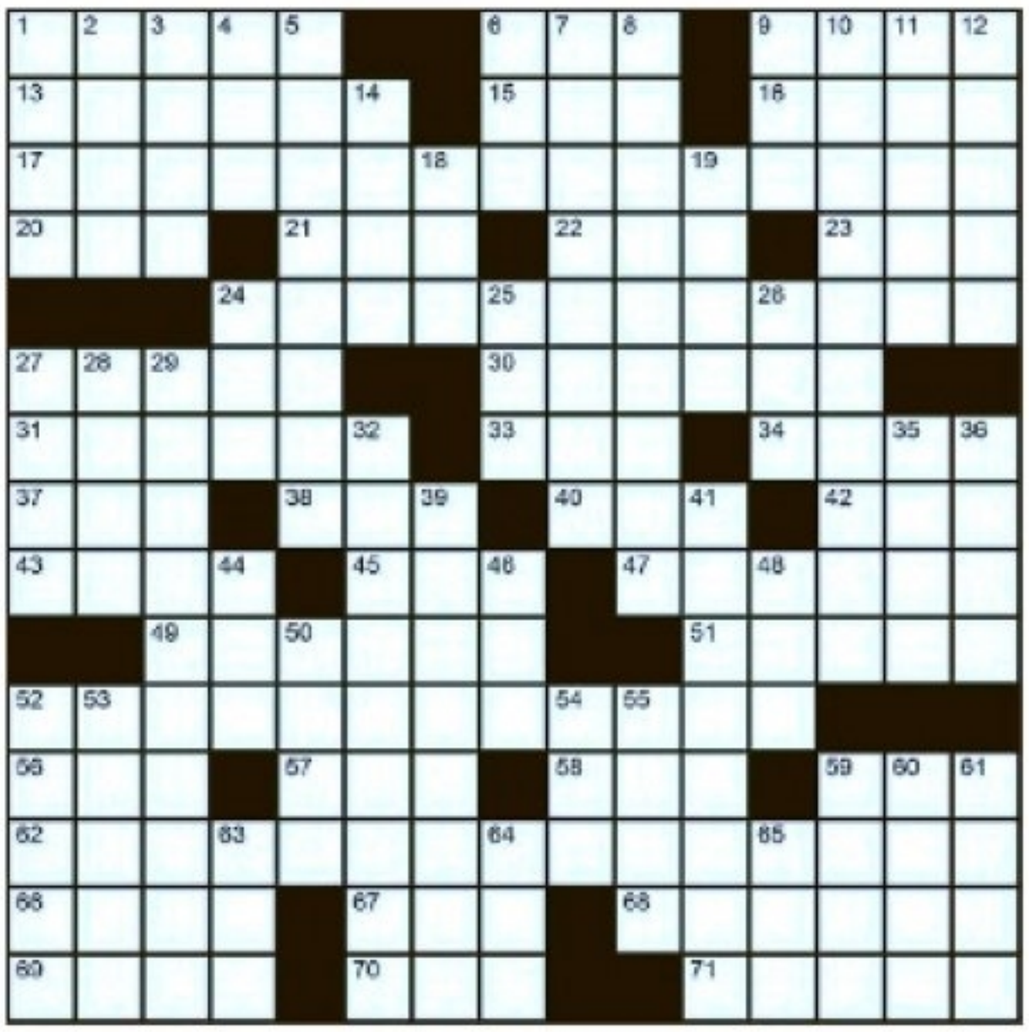
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. A. _ & Co. Productions (Company-with-a-Canadian-co-founder behind the show at #52-Across)
6. Soul: French
9. Disapproves
13. Couch potato's dinner table: 2 wds.
15. Mr. Brooks
16. Juice berry
17. Canadian Forces... Meritorious Service Cross and General Campaign Star: 2 wds.
20. Poetic contraction
21. Sing-y syllable
22. Vintage record label
23. "_ Mir Bist Du Schon" by The Andrews Sisters
24. Popular palettes in interior decor now: 2 wds.
27. Gladiator's 553
30. RSVP 'yes'
31. Country singer Lee Ann
33. Avril's Sk8er's gender
34. Window part
37. Bon _ (High society)
38. Kit _
40. 'Proto' suffix (Amoebae, and kin)
42. Compete
43. Predicament
45. Wee weekday
47. LA Dodgers division: acr. + wd.
49. _ and tribulations
51. Ms. Flynn Boyle's
52. As per #1-Across... Culinary reality show for Chef Gordon Ramsay: 2 wds.
56. 'Human' suffix
57. European peak
58. Demure
59. Trendy
62. Really cold temperature: 3 wds.
66. Spa service, _-pedi
67. Position
68. Savoured
69. Belonging to London's wee country
70. ER pros
71. Alison Moyet's "Don't Go" duo

DOWN
1. Bank _.
2. Ancient 1007
3. "_ cost ya!"
4. Prefix to 'angle'
5. Magical feat for Wayne Gretzky: 2 wds.
6. Ms. Poehler
7. Television doctor: 2 wds.
8. Public speaking strength
9. Universal ideal
10. One admiring a coral reef at great depth: 2 wds.
11. R.U.R. playwright Mr. Capek
12. Oui ouis ...in Barcelona: 2 wds.
14. Lively
18. Mr. Liotta
19. Mr. Berkus
24. Angelina Jolie role
25. Capture
26. Ward workers, wee-ly
27. Tom Bergeron hosts it [acronym]
28. Ribbon bow part
29. "Hey, that's the truth!": 3 wds.
32. 'Of Ghosts and Gods' metal band from Montreal
35. Ms. Kudrow
36. Allows
39. Where a gardener might plant bulbs: 2 wds.
41. Back street
44. Li'l old MTV show
46. Ballpark fig.
48. Pallid
50. Time _ _ a premium
52. Player's call in blackjack: 2 wds.
53. Mr. Hawke
54. Nero's 250
55. Laugh-a-minute
59. "Eraser" Canadian noise/punk band
60. Nabisco's famous treat
61. Extinct bird of Mauritius
63. '_' _ for Rimouski
64. Sci-Fi movie extras
65. Ms. Gabor, for short

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
An offer may seem attractive but don't commit yourself too quickly. Consider the pros and cons before deciding whether or not it is the right move for you. Opportunities are like buses — there will always be another.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Be on your guard when dealing with people one-to-one. You may not be the sort who gives your trust too easily but some people can be very persuasive. Don't let them sway you.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Why are you so defensive? Every time someone says something you take it as a personal slight. You're overreacting but this phase won't last long. You'll forget about it soon.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You are tired from the constant running around you've been doing but you're also pleased by the progress you've made. You'll make more progress today if you slow down and concentrate on one specific aim.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Some of the changes taking place may not be to your liking but there is nothing you can do about them. You know that, sooner or later, everything works out for the best.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You won't let anyone coerce you into doing things you don't approve of. Now extend your protection to those who cannot look after themselves. Take them under your wing.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Be on your toes where anything of a financial nature is concerned. There is little doubt you will succeed but you will also attract people who think they can get rich at your expense.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You seem to be constantly on the go, no doubt due to Mars, planet of ego and energy, in your birth sign. But even a Scorpio has limits, so slow down and focus on essentials.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Mistakes are a fact of life but if you find yourself making the same mistake over and over you can be sure that something's wrong. The world won't change for you, so you must change in response to the world.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Go all out to make a good impression on those you live and work with today. Creatively and romantically this is a great time for you and if you believe that you deserve to be lucky and loved then you will be.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you find it hard to live within your means that is a sign you're doing too many things for too many people — and paying too much for the privilege. How many of your "friends" really care for you? Be ruthless today.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
No matter how tough the challenge, you will pass with flying colours. You are endowed with the kind of self-belief that can move mountains.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

4			3	8				
	3				2			8
8	2				1	6		
		8				3	1	
		6		9		4		
	5	9				8		
		4	5				9	1
7			1				6	
				6	9			3

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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9	6	3	7	4	1	5	2	8
2	8	4	5	9	6	3	1	7
5	1	7	8	2	3	9	4	6
3	7	9	1	8	4	2	6	5
6	4	2	3	7	5	1	8	9
8	5	1	9	6	2	4	7	3
7	2	8	4	5	9	6	3	1
1	9	6	2	3	7	8	5	4
4	3	5	6	1	8	7	9	2

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